

Tiverton Town Council Landfill Subcommittee

Regular Meeting Minutes: July 18, 2007

I: Call to Order

Chairman Wyman called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM at the Tiverton Town Hall.

Members present: A. Wyman (Chairman), T. Ramotowski, J. Fernandes, D. Wilbur, D. Webster (Director of Public Works), and W. G. Steckman (Town Administrator).

Members absent: R. Hart

II: Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fernandes made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2007 meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilbur.

VOTE: The motion passed 4-0-2 (Mr. Ramotowski and Mr. Webster abstained).

Mr. Wilbur made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2007 meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fernandes.

VOTE: The motion passed 5-0-1 (Mr. Steckman abstained).

Mr. Wilbur made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2007 meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fernandes.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

III: Additions/Changes/Acceptance of Agenda

Mr. Webster stated that he wished to make a report on the status of the landfill traffic counts. Mr. Webster distributed copies of the traffic count data as of June 30, 2007. The results were consistent with what was discussed during the last Subcommittee meeting. From the beginning of March through the end of June, there were 4,183 vehicle-trips on Saturdays, 1,530 vehicle-trips on Thursdays, and 1,525 vehicle-trips on Tuesdays. The traffic counts have stopped as of June 30, 2007.

Mr. Ramotowski asked how the new trash and recyclables collector, Patriot Disposal, was faring. Mr. Webster replied that the transition from Allied to Patriot had gone smoothly in general, although there were some typical “start-up” problems, such as missed streets and pick-up locations etc. All of the problems were corrected as soon as the DPW became aware of them. Some Town residents complained that their trash collection times had been changed, but that is allowed under the contract and the solid waste disposal ordinance (as long as collection does not begin before 6:00 AM). Mr. Ramotowski and Mr. Wilbur stated that Patriot’s crews seem to be more gentle in handling residents’ trash barrels and recycling bins than Allied. Mr. Steckman noted that Patriot uses two men on the back of their trucks, and that might be contributing the better service.

Mr. Webster noted that the transition from Allied to Patriot Disposal revealed some problems that had escaped earlier notice. Apparently, Allied was collecting trash from some locations where it was not authorized by the Town to do so. This included some streets like Thibeault Lane, and some condominiums. Patriot will not be collecting from these locations. The DPW will be sending out letters to this effect to the affected properties. The owner of Patriot Disposal has been following some of his trucks as they make their rounds around Town and is making sure the workers are properly carrying out their duties.

IV: Public Input

No members of the public were in attendance; therefore, there was no public input.

V: 1st Quarter 2007 Groundwater Monitoring/Sampling/Analysis

Mr. Webster handed out copies of the groundwater and alternate monitoring results for the first quarter of 2007. In general, the results were good. Only one compliance well (OW-13) exhibited concentrations above the MCL for any of the targeted metals (arsenic and thallium). As for the alternate monitoring results at well OW-11 and the surface water sites, the number of detected metals was lower than during previous testing. The sample from SW-1 contained beryllium above its MCL; this is the first time that beryllium has been detected, and it is not clear where it might be coming from.

VI: Alternate Monitoring for the First Quarter of 2007

This item was discussed under the previous agenda item.

VII: Landfill Inspection of July 18, 2007

Mr. Webster reported that RI-DEM inspected the landfill on July 18, 2007. Mr. Webster distributed a copy of the inspection report to all members of the Subcommittee. RI-DEM was happy with the management of the landfill, and gave the operation high marks. RI-DEM suggested that an additional groundwater

monitoring well might be needed. This will be discussed in more detail later during the summer.

VIII: Committee to Examine Acceptance of Commercial Trash as a Pay Item at the Landfill to Add to the Closure Fund

Mr. Steckman handed out copies of the account summary for the landfill closure account that had been generated by the Town Treasurer's Office. The report indicates that the account contained \$2,940,196.84 as of June 27, 2007. Mr. Steckman stated that the approved amount of new money from the Town Financial Meeting has been added to the account in early July, so the account now contains more than \$3,000,000.00. The money is invested in U.S. Treasury notes, Charles Schwab, and at Citizen's Bank. Mr. Webster noted that Pare Engineering has estimated the cost of closing the landfill to be about \$8,500,000.00, and that there is about 8-10 years left of usable life at the present rate of trash generation within Town.

Chairman Wyman asked if the landfill could be closed/capped in stages, rather than all at once. Mr. Webster replied that such a scenario was unlikely. Mr. Webster stated that once it was capped, the landfill property could generate revenue. Mr. Ramotowski stated that he was opposed to bonding any of the landfill closure costs, and that the Subcommittee needed to provide the Town Council with alternatives other than bonding. Also, the amount of money being placed into the closure account from general tax revenue is too low – the amount was set in 1994 at \$168,304.00 and has never been increased – even to keep up with inflation or population growth in Town.

IX: Date and Time for the Next Meeting

Mr. Steckman stated that the Subcommittee should briefly discuss the status of the cell phone tower at the landfill.

Mr. Steckman stated that a broker from Verizon had called and stated that the company wanted to add another antenna to the tower at the landfill. This would require an increase in the "footprint" of the tower facility because the service building would need to be made a bit bigger. Mr. Webster stated that RI-DEM was consulted on this issue, because the tower is located in the landfill's buffer zone, and that they had given their consent.

Mr. Steckman stated that he was negotiating a new fee for the Town, based upon the addition of the antenna. The company has given some indication that they would like to own the tower and the land it sits on outright, instead of leasing it from the Town. Mr. Webster asked how much Singular was paying for its current antenna lease. Mr. Steckman replied that the agreement was \$10,000.00/year. Mr. Ramotowski suggested that all of the lease monies should be placed in the

restricted landfill closure account. The lease amount also seems to be on the low side of what such a structure would be worth.

Mr. Steckman stated that he was determined to negotiate a better lease deal for the Town. Verizon wants a 15-year lease, but the Town will probably offer a 10-year lease, with a gradual increase in the lease payments over the life of the lease. Chairman Wyman suggested checking with other Towns that have lease agreements for towers and antennae to see what the going rate was. Mr. Steckman stated that the customer density within a given area determines the rate that the company would be willing to pay.

Mr. Webster stated that the condition of the bulldozers at the landfill needed to be discussed. The newer of the two machines (actually 7 years old) needs significant work. The DPW had delayed work on its undercarriage as long as possible, but now its needs to go into the shop, because the undercarriage gave out. The repair estimate is over \$20,000.00. The Town is presently renting a machine for \$1,800.00/week for the next couple of weeks until the repairs are completed. Mr. Ramotowski asked why a bulldozer was being rented when the Town was required to keep a spare machine on hand in case anything happened to the primary dozer. Mr. Webster replied that the spare (older) dozer was unusable – it could not be started. The estimate for repairing it is a minimum of \$15,000.00. Mr. Ramotowski asked when the new machine that was approved for purchase at the last Town Financial Meeting would be delivered and available for use. Mr. Webster stated that the specifications for the new machine will be presented to the Town Council for approval at its next regular meeting. The older machine will be traded in as part of the lease/sales agreement for the new one.

Mr. Steckman stated that the Town schools are not using the landfill for their garbage. Apparently, they have their own contract with a trash hauler. This arrangement may not be financially beneficial for the Town. In addition, the schools are not recycling much of their waste stream. That could be a problem for the Town down the road when all Town trash is sent to the Central Landfill, and the recycling ratio will affect the tipping fee. The poor recycling record of the schools has been discussed with school management, and they are going to try to do better. There are some unique problems associated with the schools, such as beverage containers in the lunchroom trash not being completely empty (as they need to be to go into the recycling bins).

It was noted that the next meeting of the Landfill Subcommittee was scheduled for August 15, 2007 at 3:00 PM at the Town Hall.

There being no further business to discuss, the Landfill Subcommittee's July 18, 2007 regular meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM.

These minutes were recorded and compiled by T. Ramotowski